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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PINS](#) [PGOV](#) [CASC](#) [FR](#) [MA](#)
SUBJECT: MADAGASCAR: FRENCH UNCERTAIN HOW EVENTS WILL
DEVELOP

REF: A. ANTANANARIVO 166
[1](#)B. PARIS 342

Classified By: Classified by Deputy Political Counselor William Jordan,
1.4 (b/d).

[1](#)1. (C) French MFA Madagascar desk officer Beatrice Lederle on March 13 said that the GOF was having trouble evaluating events in Madagascar and developing a clear notion of where the crisis was heading. She said that the involvement of the military surprised the French. The situation on one level was worsening -- "a few days ago we were calling for renewed dialogue. Now it seems we are hoping that there will be no fighting."

[1](#)2. (C) Lederle said that Mayor Rajoelina left the French ambassador's residence the morning of Thursday, March 12. Lederle said that he stayed longer than expected (ref B) given the circumstances. The GOF, as the result of a "senior-level political decision," chose to avoid stating clearly the mayor's status on Thursday so as not to jeopardize his safe departure from French control and to minimize the risk that anti-French action would break out in connection with the move. She said that Rajoelina was now "at a safe location controlled by the Archbishop." Lederle indicated that the French were relieved that they were no longer responsible for Rajoelina's security.

[1](#)3. (C) Lederle said that, as far as she understood, not many French had left Madagascar, although that could change quickly if the situation deteriorated. She noted that a GOF emergency action plan had been prepared and was ready to be implemented if necessary, but she refrained from discussing details of the plan. Lederle welcomed continued dialogue between the GOF and USG, at all levels, to facilitate a mutual understanding of the rapidly changing situation.

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